

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 11491

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR VS HU PL

SUBJ: ICCS: POLISH AND HUNGARIAN DIFFERENCES

REF: SAIGON 11373

1. INTRODUCTION. THE REFTEL RECAPITULATES THE RECORD OF RECENT POLISH AND HUNGARIAN OBSTRUCTIONISM IN THE ICCS. THIS MESSAGE WILL SET FORTH SOME OF THE OVERT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE APPROACHES OF THE POLISH AND HUNGARIAN DELEGATIONS IN SAIGON.

2. TACTICAL COORDINATION. THE OVERALL STRATEGIC INSTRUCTIONS GIVEN TO THE TWO DELEGATIONS BY THEIR GOVERNMENTS ARE OBVIOUSLY TO PROTECT AND ADVANCE THE INTERESTS OF THE DRV AND "PRG". IN ICCS COMMITTEE MEETINGS, IN PURSUANCE OF THIS PRIMARY OBJECTIVE, POLISH AND HUNGARIAN TACTICS, WHILE NORMALLY CLOSELY COORDINATED AND CONSISTENT WITH EACH OTHER, OCCASIONALLY APPEAR TO DIVERGE. HOWEVER, ON SUCH OCCASIONS, ACCORDING TO THE INDONESIAN AND IRANIAN
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DELEGATIONS, WITHIN 24 HOURS THE COMMUNIST DELEGATIONS ELIMINATE

ANY TACTICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THEMSELVES AND AGAIN PRESENT A UNITED TACTICAL POSITION.

3. VIETNAM EXPERIENCE. THE MAIN DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE POLES AND HUNGARIANS STEM IN PART FROM THE FACT THAT, WHILE THE HUNGARIANS WERE NEWCOMERS TO SOUTH VIETNAM IN JANUARY 1973, THE POLES HAVE A BACKGROUND OF 20 YEARS' INVOLVEMENT IN INDOCHINA CEASE-FIRE AFFAIRS THROUGH THEIR MEMBERSHIP IN THE OLD ICC. SOME OF THE POLISH OFFICERS ARE IN THEIR SECOND OR EVEN THIRD TOURS IN INDOCHINA, AND THEY CONSEQUENTLY FEEL MUCH MORE AT HOME IN SAIGON. THE DIFFERENCES IN THEIR LIFE-STYLES ARE TYPICALLY REFLECTED IN THE FACT THAT THE POLES HAVE OCCUPIED TWO OF THE SPACIOUS VILLAS IN THE OLD ICC COMPOUND, WHILE THE HUNGARIANS INCLUDING THEIR AMBASSADOR REMAIN AUSTERELY HOLED UP IN HOTELS.

4. DIPLOMATIC CONTACT WITH THE GVN. CONSISTENT WITH THIS DIFFERENCE IN THEIR LIFE-STYLES HAS BEEN A DIFFERENCE IN THEIR DIPLOMATIC STYLES. THE POLES ESTABLISHED INFORMAL CONTACT WITH THE GVN FOREIGN MINISTRY, WHICH THE HUNGARIANS HAVE DECLINED TO DO. THE HUNGARIANS HAVE TENDED TO ATTEMPT TO INVOLVE THE USG AS AN UNNECESSARY INTERMEDIARY BETWEEN THE GOH AND THE GVN IN MATTERS SUCH AS COURIER FLIGHT NOTIFICATION (BUDAPEST 1806) OR ALLEGED GVN-INSPIRED PRESS ATTACKS. IT WAS THE POLISH DELEGATION WHICH ARRANGED THE ICCS TRIP FROM SAIGON TO HANOI LAST JANUARY, NECESSITATING THE FORM OF CONTACT WITH THE GVN FOREIGN MINISTRY WHICH THE HUNGARIAN DELEGATION HAS AVOIDED.

5. SUBSTANTIVE POSITIONS. IN ICCS PLENARY SESSIONS THE HUNGARIAN DELEGATION HAS GENERALLY APPEARED TO TAKE THE MORE INTRANSIGENT HARD-LINE COMMUNIST POSITION. THE HUNGARIAN DELEGATION LED OFF WITH THE STRONGEST STATEMENT ATTACKING THE DELIVERY OF F-5E'S TO SOUTH VIETNAM IN THE 106TH PLENARY SESSION ON MARCH 29 (MINUTES POUNCHED TO EA/VN). IN FEBRUARY THE HUNGARIAN DELEGATION VETOED AN IRANIAN COMPROMISE PROPOSAL TO FACILITATE RESUMPTION OF INVESTIGATIONS AFTER THE POLISH AMBASSADOR HAD TOLD THE IRANIAN AMBASSADOR HE COULD ACCEPT IT (SAIGON 2410). IT IS, HOWEVER, QUITE LIKELY THAT THE APPEARANCE OF A DIVERGENCE IN DEGREES OF INTRANSIGENCE IS FREQUENTLY WORKED OUT BETWEEN THE POLISH AND HUNGARIAN DELEGATIONS BEFOREHAND SO AS TO OBTAIN THE MAXIMUM BENEFIT FOR COMMUNIST OBJECTIVES WHILE PRESERVING A FLEXIBLE NE-CONFIDENTIAL

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GOTIATING POSTURE ON THE PART OF ONE DELEGATION FOR TARGETS OF OPPORTUNITY.

6. SOCIAL CONTACTS. THE SENIOR OFFICERS OF THE HUNGARIAN DELEGATION AS NOTED HAVE LIVED AUSTERELY IN SAIGON, ENTERTAINING QUIETLY IN LOCAL RESTAURANTS OR THE ICCS OFFICERS' MESS. THEY HAVE MADE NO PUBLIC EFFORT TO ENTERTAIN LOCAL "THIRD FORCE" POLITICIANS AND COMPARATIVELY LITTLE EFFORT TO CULTIVATE THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS.

BY CONTRAST, THE POLISH AMBASSADOR HOSTS LAVISH RECEPTIONS IN HIS VILLA, MIXING TOGETHER THE DRV AND "PRG" DELEGATIONS WITH SOME OF THEIR GVN COUNTERPARTS, THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS, THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS, AND SOME SELF-PROCLAIMED "THIRD FORCE" OR EXTREME OPPOSITION POLITICAL FIGURES FROM SAIGON.

7. MEDIATION. THE POLES ASSERT THAT THEY CONSIDER THE MEDIATING ROLE IMPORTANT FOR THE ICCS, WHICH IS WHY THEY MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH THE "THIRD FORCE" AND HOLD "MIXING" PARTIES AS DESCRIBED ABOVE. THE HUNGARIANS, IN CONTRAST, HAVE INDICATED TO US THAT THEY DO NOT PLACE MUCH STOCK IN THIS SELF-PROCLAIMED THIRD FORCE OR SEE PROSPECTS FOR SUCCESSFUL ICCS MEDIATION IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

8. DIPLOMATIC PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES. THE POLES LEAD THE WAY IN INSISTING ON AN INTERPRETATION OF THE ICCS PROTOCOL GIVING THEM THE SAME P & I STATUS AS AN EMBASSY. WHILE THE POLES AND HUNGARIANS EACH EXPERIENCED A DEFECTION THIS YEAR, THE POLES (PERHAPS FOR THE RECORD) TOOK A VERY FIRM LINE WITH THE USG AND THE GVN IN DEMANDING THE RETURN OF THEIR DEFECTOR, WHOM THEY ALLEGED WAS MENTALLY ILL; WHEREAS THE HUNGARIANS TREATED THE DEFECTION OF THEIR OFFICER FATALISTICALLY AND MADE ONLY PRO FORMA APPROACHES TO THE USG AND GVN.

9. ICCS FINANCES. BOTH THE POLISH AND HUNGARIAN DELEGATIONS HAVE RESISTED DISCLOSING ICCS SECRETARIAT AND NATIONAL DELEGATION EXPENDITURES TO THE US EMBASSY AS ONE OF THE FOUR SIGNATORY PARTIES. WHEN APPROACHED BY AN EMBOFF FOR INFORMATION ON THESE EXPENDITURES, THE HUNGARIAN AMBASSADOR FLATLY DECLINED; HOWEVER, THE POLISH AMBASSADOR DESIGNATED POLISH DELEGATION OFFICERS TO MEET WITH THE EMBOFF "INFORMALLY" AND GIVE HIM SOME VERY GENERAL FISCAL DATA, STIPULATING THAT THE EMBOFF SHOULD NOT DISCUSS THE MEETING WITH "OTHER ICCS DELEGATIONS". SINCE THE SUBSTANCE OF THIS DATA WAS SO SMALL, IT WAS PRIMARILY THE STYLE OF THE COMMUNIST DELEGATIONS CONFIDENTIAL

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THAT DIFFERED.

10. PERSONAL DIPLOMATIC STYLE. IN DEBATE WITH NON-COMMUNISTS, BOTH IN ICCS PLENARY SESSIONS AND IN PRIVATE OR ON SOCIAL OCCASIONS, THE HUNGARIANS TEND TO RELY MORE ON INTELLECTUAL AND THEORETICAL LEGAL ARGUMENTS REFLECTING A MIXTURE OF DIALECTIC AND CENTRAL EUROPEAN LAW FACULTY TRAINING. SEVERAL HUNGARIANS APPEAR TO SEEK OUT AND ENJOY DEBATING WITH US EMBOFFS. IN ADDITION TO THIS LEGALISTIC APPROACH, THE POLES TEND TO PUSH SLICKER BUT MORE SUPERFICIAL OR PRAGMATIC ARGUMENTS OF A POLITICO-DIPLOMATIC NATURE, PERHAPS REFLECTING THEIR MUCH LONGER EXPOSURE TO INDOCHINA ISSUES. THE HUNGARIAN DELEGATION HAS A HIGHER PROPORTION OF STRAIGHT INTELLIGENCE PERSONNEL. HOWEVER, AN OBSERVANT OFFICER IN THE GVN DELEGATION TO THE TPJMC THINKS THE POLES ARE MORE SUBTLY DANGEROUS.

11. OVERVIEW. FINALLY, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT OFFICERS OF BOTH THE POLISH AND HUNGARIAN DELEGATIONS, EXCEPT FOR THE TRUE DOCTRINAIRE FANATICS, PROBABLY FIND THEIR TASK OF PRACTISING DECEPTION WITH THEIR NON-COMMUNIST COLLEAGUES IN THE ICCS DISTASTEFUL TO THE SAME DEGREE. OCCASIONALLY IN THE CASE OF MANY OF THE OFFICERS OF BOTH DELEGATIONS THE APPARATCHIK MASK IS DROPPED AND THE NATURALLY COURTEOUS, SELF-RESPECTING APPROACH THAT WE TRADITIONALLY ASSOCIATE WITH THE POLES AND HUNGARIANS AS A PEOPLE IS DISCLOSED BENEATH. IT IS THEIR INSTRUCTIONS ORIGINATING IN MOSCOW, NOT THEIR OWN NATIONAL INTERESTS, WHICH DICTATE THE POSITIONS THEY MUST TAKE HERE. ANY APPARENT DIFFERENCES IN STYLE ARE FAR LESS SIGNIFICANT THAN THIS BASIC FACT.

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